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buster. In the pages of this volume prospective visitors to Central America may read about its scorpions, ants, and wood-ticks. Scattered through the book are numerous photographs which do not always illustrate the adjoining text. A map of Central America appropriately serves as a frontispiece.

This volume does not contain much material of interest for the serious student of history: the treatment throughout is popular; obviously the book is intended for the general reader, and especially for Englishmen. Here and there it is suggested that a field for industrial expansion is slipping away from England in Central America because of the enterprise and the diplomacy of the Yankees. The book would have been more useful to prospective settlers or investors, if less space had been occupied by general impressions and if more attention had been paid to the political and economic conditions of Central America.

W. S. ROBERTSON

A Source Book in American History, to 1787. Collected and Edited by Willis Mason West, sometime professor of history and head of the department at the University of Minnesota. (Boston, New York, and Chicago: Allyn and Bacon, 1913. 586 p. $1.50)

This is a convenient manual of source material bearing on two centuries of our early history prior to 1787. The attention has been focused steadily on the origin and development of political institutions and the evolution of independent states. Social and economic factors are rigidly subordinated. The colonies as phenomena in the history of the expansion of Europe find no place.

Charters, constitutions, laws, instructions, resolutions, and official records in general constitute a large portion of the material used. In addition, extracts from the diaries, letters, and writings of men prominent in political life are given due recognition. There are included quite a few sources new to books of this kind, thus giving a freshness to the collection and making accessible valuable material usually not available in handy form.

The lion's share of the space, roughly one-half, is allotted to the origin and development of institutions prior to 1660. A trifle over one-third is given to the era of Revolution and constitution making. A century of growth, 1660-1760, is grudgingly permitted the remaining one-sixth. In the apportionment of time and space the editor has followed the beaten track of Fiske and Bancroft who dealt heavily with the dramatic periods of colonization and Revolution, and found little space for the middle period. In consequence the perspective is somewhat warped. It is a matter for serious criticism to devote sixteen pages to the motives of colonization and none to the constitutional conflicts of the eighteenth cen-

tury. It is a mistake to omit the coming of the foreigners in the eighteenth century and the creation of a region which differed so radically from the older settlements in ideals and social structure as to engender bitter sectional antagonism. It is a fault to suppose that the rôle of the colonies in the imperial relation has no bearing on the development of political institutions. It is the failure to appreciate the importance and significance of the first half of the eighteenth century that accounts for these errors of omission. A knowledge of the constitutional development and sectionalism of this period are vital to a proper understanding of the constitution making of the later period to which the editor gives so much space. The period 1690-1750 is the neglected period; it is just at present beginning to be known and perhaps it is unfair to hold the editor responsible for a period about which our knowledge is yet inadequate.

In the treatment of institutional development in its early stages Virginia and Massachusetts have been singled out for full and particular attention as typical of their respective sections. At the same time a few illustrations are given of the other colonies. The revolutionary era is treated in a manner new and interesting. Consistent with the editor's plan the British-American quarrel is subordinated and the emphasis is placed on the processes involved in the transition from colonial to independent status. The crude organization of revolutionary sentiment in committees of correspondence and commercial agreements, the gradual elaboration of a network of machinery from the smallest unit to Continental Congress, and the framing of state and federal constitutions, which are both a culmination and embodiment of earlier practices, form the content for study. Virginia is taken as typical of the process in general. The fundamental problem of the establishment of authority in America has usually been neglected.

Brief introductions, occasional footnotes, and a few scattered hints for study add something to the teaching value of the book.

W. T. Root